

The Pretribulation Rapture

by David J. Stewart | [Listen To Gospel Medley](#)

The Bible clearly teaches that the Rapture occurs BEFORE the Tribulation, and the Tribulation occurs BEFORE the Millennial reign of Jesus Christ from Jerusalem.



"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." —1st Thessalonians 4:13-18

Here are 28 differences between the Rapture and Christ's Second Coming

The Predictable, Unpredictable, Pre-Tribulation, Rapture

Anything Other Than a Pre-Tribulation Rapture Removes The Prophesied Element Of Surprise

The strongest evidence in the Bible of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture (that is, the Biblical doctrine that Jesus Christ will return FOR the saints BEFORE the 7-year Tribulation period) is the PROPHESIED ELEMENT OF SURPRISE! Plainly, the Lord Jesus taught that NO MAN KNOWS THE TIME of His return. *Matthew 24:44*, “*Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*” *Luke 12:40*, “*Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*” Anything other than a Pre-tribulation Rapture (in time of event) totally REMOVES this Biblical element of surprise.

The Bible predicts the Rapture, telling us that it will be unpredictable, imminent, without warning, and will be visible only to THE SAINTS. When Jesus raised up from the dead, 1st Corinthians 15:6 teaches that the Lord appeared bodily to over 500 BRETHREN AT ONCE. The Lord did not appear to any unsaved people after His resurrection. The Lord appeared to Mary Magdalene, His 12 apostles, over 500 disciples at once and others. There is no record of any unsaved person seeing the Lord in His resurrected body.

Likewise, the Lord will only appear to the saints at the Rapture when He comes. The unsaved world, although no doubt they will be adversely affected to some degree by the Rapture, will not see Christ at that time. The world will see Christ 7-years later when He returns to the earth riding on a white horse of judgment at the Second Coming. I have listed 28 differences contrasting the Rapture to the Second Coming; such as the fact that the saints will be GOING UP at the Rapture, but they will be COMING DOWN at the Second Coming.

Granted, the Rapture is a more difficult doctrine in the Bible to discern, simply because it requires a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the chronological order of prophetic events. God created time as a mean of letting His children know what will happen next on His prophetic time line. The Lord calls us His friends, as He clarified in *John 15:15*, “*Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.*” The Lord as our friend is telling us what He is going to do in the future. What an awesome Savior!

I marvel when I think about how our omnipotent God chose to live in my body as a Christian believer, being as close as is possible with me as His child. Jesus wanted to be so close to each of His children, that He planned before we were even conceived to live within our very being, uniting with our very soul. 1st Corinthians 3:16-17 teaches that the believer's human body is the temple of the Holy Spirit of God. My human heart and mind cannot fathom such awesome love, to think that the God Who spoke the universe into existence, would choose and make it possible to live within my very body continually, never to leave me (1st John 4:4; James 13:5).

There is probably not a more controversial doctrine than the Rapture of the saints in the Bible. Skeptics love to point out that the word “Rapture” is not found in the Bible, but neither is the word “Bible.” So why do we use the term Bible? The word “Rapture” does NO

injustice to the Scriptures. The teaching of the Rapture is Biblical. The word “Rapture” means “to be caught away,” which is plainly taught in 1st Thessalonians 4:17. Many critics of the Rapture doctrine have stressed this fact over and over, that is, that the word “rapture” is not found in the Bible. However, the word “Trinity” is not found in the Bible either. Nevertheless, the word “Godhead” most certainly is found in the Bible (if you have a non-corrupted Bible). I prefer the word “Godhead” for this simple reason. This is why modern Bible butcherers completely removed the word “Godhead,” so Satan could attack the deity of Christ.

The reliable King James Bible mentions the “Godhead” in Acts 17:29, Romans 1:20 and Colossians 2:9. All modern corrupted Bible versions completely remove the word Godhead. The reason why was to broaden their marketing base (the love of money), catering to the sectarian bias of hundreds of various religious groups. Satan is behind the modern corrupted Bible versions, attacking the deity of Jesus Christ, the Godhead and His preeminence.

Nevertheless, I confidently believe that the word “Trinity” does NO injustice to the plain teachings of the Word of God. The word accurately describes the divine triune nature of God. Howbeit, as I mentioned, I prefer to use the word “GODHEAD.” Tragically, modern versions of the Bible, such as the damnable *New International Version* [NIV or H.I.V.] have removed this word Godhead completely (as they have the words: trucebreakers, winebibbers, carnal, slothful, unthankful, effeminate, backbiting, vanity, lasciviousness, whoredom, devils, fornication, Lucifer, damnation, brimstone, and the bottomless pit, Calvary, propitiation, bottomless pit, sodomites, et cetera).

The name and doctrine of Lucifer have been completely removed from modern so-called “easy-to-read” corrupt Bibles. Read Isaiah 14:12 for yourself and verify what I say. Lucifer (Satan) is behind the Bible-corrupting movement, which is why he wants people to think that he doesn't really exist. Wake up!

God Always Deals With Israel and the Church Separately

Don't forget this one great truth about Bible prophecy, that is, God never deals with Israel and the Church at the same time. In the Old Testament God dealt with Israel; but in the New Testament God is dealing with the Church. Whenever God deals with His earthly chosen nation, then He is not dealing with the Church. God set aside Israel in the Old Testament because of her spiritual harlotry. We are now living in the Church age, in the “Times Of The Gentiles” (Luke 21:24). In the Tribulation God will once again deal with Israel.

Please listen to: [Why I Am Glad I Won't Be In The Tribulation](#) | [Great Tribulation](#) (heart-touching, life-changing, MP3 sermons by [Evangelist Phil Kidd](#)).

This further evidences that the Church will be taken out of the world before the Tribulation period, which is a time when God will deal once again with Israel. The Church will NOT go through the Tribulation, nor half-way through the Tribulation.

Were Billy Sunday, Moody, Jones, Hutson, Rice and Ironside All Wrong?

May I humbly make the important observation that the greatest men of God of the past 150 years all believed in a PRETRIBULATION RAPTURE! Harry A. Ironside, John R. Rice, Jack Hyles, Bob Jones Sr., Lee Roberson, Oliver B. Greene, R.A. Torrey, Dwight Moody, Lester Roloff, Curtis Hutson, Billy Sunday, W.A. Criswell, Charles C. Ryrie, Raymond Barber and others all concluded and taught a Pretribulation Rapture of the saints!!! Amen! Were they all wrong on the Bible? I think not!

Read what Evangelist Billy Sunday said in his classic sermon, *“The Second Coming Of Christ”*...

The Lord does not come to the world at the time of the Rapture, but only reveals himself to the members of His Body. At the time of his resurrection He was only seen by those who believed on Him. Pilate and the High Priest, and those who crucified Him, did not know that He was risen. So it will be at the time of the Rapture. The world will not know that He has been here, and will have no knowledge of Him until He comes with the members of His Body, at the close of the Tribulation.

SOURCE: [The Second Coming of Christ — by Evangelist Billy Sunday](#)

Clearly, Billy Sunday concluded and taught a Pretribulation Rapture. The Bible very plainly teaches that the TIME of the Rapture is a carefully guarded secret. Those critics who decry a “secret Rapture” are criticizing the Lord's very Words, for Jesus clearly stated in *Mark 13:32-33*, *“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.”* The timing of the Rapture my friend is indeed A BIG SECRET!!! And again we read in *Matthew 24:36*, *“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”*

Only a Pre-tribulation Rapture Focuses On Jesus Himself

Beware of the shallow pseudo-scholarship of this apostate generation. Remember, the purpose of all Bible prophecy is to testify of Jesus. *Revelation 19:10*, *“...worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”* The Rapture is all about the great and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, JESUS CHRIST!!! The Rapture is not about the appearance of the Antichrist, nor is it about the Tribulation, nor is it about God's wrath being poured out upon the wicked world; but rather, the Rapture is all about the return of OUR DEAR SAVIOR JESUS!!!

All of these post-tribulation false prophets, and pre-wrath heretics, are failing to focus on the Lord Jesus Christ. The entire purpose behind a sudden, unpredictable, return of Christ is so that each and every believer will live accordingly, on their toes (so-to-speak), laboring to preach the gospel, walking in the Spirit, praying and abiding in the Scriptures, watching and waiting for the Lord's imminent return. *Mark 13:36-37*, *“Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.”*

A “Falling Away” Must Happen First

In the following Scriptures, we read the term “a falling away” . . .

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;" —2nd Thessalonians 2:1-3

The Greek meaning for this phrase is "a departure." I believe that this term refers to the departure of the Saints. The reason is because the context of the surrounding Scripture passage tells us, "BE NOT SOON SHAKEN IN MIND, OR BE TROUBLED." What should we not be troubled about? Verse 1 tells us that this issue concerns the "COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." Now if this Scripture is telling us that the Lord will not return until the world goes into total apostasy, then this passage is not very helpful or comforting, because it would be highly susceptible to speculation. Many people thought during the days of the Roman Empire, when Julius Caesar mercilessly murdered 430,000 German tribesmen (see, *KILLING JESUS*, by Bill O'Reilly) that the end was near. Many people thought World Wars I and II were the end. If however, this Scripture passage is referring to the departure (FALLING AWAY) of the saints, then that is very clear-cut and unmistakable.

Some people believe that the phrase "a falling away" in 2nd Thessalonians 2:3 refers to a departure from law and order, i.e., anarchy! These are the folks who believe in a Pre-wrath (mid tribulation) or Posttribulation (after the tribulation) Rapture. Of course, this is not the PLAIN teaching of the Bible. Although the anarchy theory sounds very plausible, it is not very practical because history is filled with anarchy, rebellion and lawlessness. Dr. Jack Hyles explains this historical fact in his [awesome MP3](#) sermon, [**WHY THE ANTICHRIST MUST COME SOON!**](#)

In addition, I will show you further Scriptures in a moment that overwhelmingly support the departure of the saints prior to the Tribulation period (i.e., the 7-year time between the Rapture and the millennial reign of Christ from Jerusalem). So, I could just as easily use the term "falling away" (or the departure), but the term "Rapture" DOES justice to the overwhelming amount of Biblical evidence in support of a *Rapture* of the saints (i.e., when all the saints shall all be caught up together in the clouds to be with Jesus). There's no mention of the word "dispensation" in the Bible, but the Bible plainly teaches [**Dispensationalism**](#) (Dr. Harry Ironside).

Albeit, beware of [**Ultra-Dispensationalism**](#) (by Dr. Jack Hyles). It is ridiculous to complain about words which perfectly fit Biblical teachings which are 100% accurate. However, if you don't like the term *Rapture*, then don't use it; but it is sinful to deny that the saints will be "CAUGHT UP" when Christ returns for His Church before the Tribulation, which is a very different and distinctive event than Christ's Second Coming after the 7-year Tribulation to establish His earthly kingdom and reign from the throne of David in Israel. At the Rapture, the saints are ascending UP; but at Christ's Second Coming, the saints are descending DOWN.

Here is an excellent exegesis of the much debated phrase "falling away" from 2nd Thessalonians 2:2 by Dr. Max D. Younce...

B. We now examine II Thessalonians 2:3, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day (day of LORD) shall not come, except there come a falling away (departure) first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition."

We are now introduced to the Greek word "apostasia" which is translated as "falling away" in the King James Translation. The basic meaning of the word is "departure." One cannot tell from the meaning of the word, itself, whether it is in reference to the departure, i.e., the Rapture of the Church; or, a "departure from the truth," known as apostasy. "Apostasia" translated as "falling away" is quite misleading, as it does not incorporate the meaning "to fall" or "fell." For example, check Matthew 10:29 ("fall"); Matthew 17:6 ("fell"); John 18:6 ("fell"), etc. These are translated from the Greek word "pipto," not "apostasia." Therefore, only by the context in which "apostasia" occurs can it be determined if it is in reference to a departure from the faith, or the departure of the Church from the world.

It should be noted, that to the best of my knowledge, all English translations prior to the King James Translation translated "apostasia" either as "departing" or "departure." Also, the Bible known as the Vulgate, about 400 A.D., was Jerome's Latin translation. Here Jerome uses the Latin word "discessio", meaning "departure" for "apostasia."

With this in mind, one can see that this is in perfect harmony with Verse 1, which ascribes to the Rapture. "Now we beseech you brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him." (The Rapture). This is the same as Paul had previously spoken about in I Thessalonians 4:17 concerning the Rapture. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

In I Thessalonians 4:13-17, Paul gives the principles of the Rapture; whereas, in II Thessalonians 2, he gives the procedure concerning the Rapture, which is Pre-Tribulation.

May we make a few more observations which lead us to conclude that "apostasia" in II Thessalonians 2:3 is speaking of the Church departing from the earth, raptured to meet her Savior in the clouds, and not a departure from the faith.

(1). Notice in Verse 7, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work." Paul states that apostasy from the faith was already present. Hymenaeus and Alexander were two of them. (I Timothy 1:19,20). There were false teachers of the law. (I Timothy 1:4-7). False teachings concerning the resurrection. (II Timothy 2:16-18). Read Jude; I John 2:18; II Peter 2:1-3; I John 4:1-3, and we could go on and on. In other words, from the offspring of Adam and Eve there has always been apostasy from the faith. What do we attribute the Flood to? In Israel

there were the false prophets and priests. It was the same at the time of Christ and ever since, to the present. Therefore, it would be ludicrous to think that “apostasia” in II Thessalonians 2:3 was in reference to “apostasy from the faith” when there has never been a time when apostasy has not been with us.

Therefore, how would the Thessalonians recognize any apostasy different from the apostasy that already existed and that has always existed in one way or another. From the context, itself, we know the “apostasia” in Verse 3 is not in reference to departure from the faith, already existent; but, rather, a departure of the Church from the world, or the Rapture. Apostasy already existed as stated in Verse 7, “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work...”

We have the same false teachers today, advocating a Partial or a Post-Tribulation Rapture, as those believers in Thessalonica encountered over 1900 years ago. As we have stated previously, the Christian is admonished to be “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ,” NOT, “the blessed hope and glorious appearing of the Tribulation Period! (I.e., the Day of God’s Wrath.).

SOURCE: [Will the Church Be Raptured Before, During, or After the Tribulation Period?](#)

Clearly, the “falling away” (verse 2) refers to “our gathering together unto him” (verse 1).

One of the best statements I ever read was the following statement by Dr. John R. Rice, “The best way to interpret the Bible is not to interpret it at all.” I like that. So often people make the MISTAKE of trying to find things in the Bible that God didn't put there. We are commanded to “search the Scriptures” (John 5:39); however, we must not search for what is not there. It is critically important that we apply wisdom when studying the Bible. How do we do this? By taking the Bible at face value unless it says otherwise. The Book of Revelation does entail much symbolism, but the Bible CLEARLY indicates the meaning. Many false doctrines have been constructed by ignorant and unlearned men who are unskilled at dividing the truth...

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." —2nd Timothy 2:15

How do you “rightly divide” the Word of God? By cross-referencing the Bible, i.e., comparing Scripture with Scripture. Correct Bible exegesis means to compare one truth to another and never take any Scripture outside of the contextual agreement of all the other Scriptures in the Bible as a whole.

As an example: Mark 16:16 says, “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*” Many people (including some preachers) foolishly believe that a person MUST be water baptized to be saved. A quick cross-reference over to

1st Corinthians 1:17 would reveal otherwise. Paul said, ***“For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.”*** In believing we are justified IN GOD'S EYES by faith; but in water baptism we are justified IN THE EYES OF MEN by our works. Likewise, Paul speaks of the ROOT of the believer's faith in Romans, being justified IN GOD'S EYES by faith alone (Romans 4:5-6); whereas James speaks of the FRUIT of the believer's faith, being justified by works IN THE EYES OF MEN (James 2:17-24).

John 4:2 says that Jesus didn't water baptize anyone; but His disciples did instead. If baptism were required by God for salvation, do you think Jesus and the Apostle Paul would have left it to someone else? There is no Biblical record of the woman at the well getting water baptized in John chapter 4, nor did Jesus ever tell her to go get water baptized.

The Apostle Paul clearly said that Jesus did NOT send him to baptize anyone. No one in the Old Testament was ever water baptized. The repentant thief on the cross wasn't water baptized. Clearly, water baptism is NOT essential to salvation as some false churches errantly require today. Do you now see the importance of cross-referencing the Bible? I could show you dozens and dozens of such examples of false doctrines which result from failure to compare Scripture with Scripture. So, never base a doctrine upon a single Scripture passage without taking into consideration the entire scope of the Scriptures. Ask the Holy Spirit of God to guide you...

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” —John 16:13

Let the Holy Spirit be your guide, and He'll lead you around the minefields of heresy. Of course, you CANNOT have the Holy Spirit to guide you unless you are a born-again believer. If you have never accepted Christ as your personal Saviour, then please do so now. You need HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS!

Having laid the groundwork, I would like to share with you some thoughts concerning the Rapture. There's so much garbage (i.e., doctrinal heresy) on the internet today. I am saddened that America's churches have been so lax in this needy area of preaching the truth in cyberspace. Far more people are surfing the internet than attending church these days, and you can't blame them in view of the apostate condition of Christianity today. Jesus said that the unsaved in His generation were wiser than the saved, *“...for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light”* (Luke 16:8). And so it is today. Let us be diligent as believers in these Last Days—to contend for the Biblical faith, to stand against the evils of our time, to walk with Jesus and to aggressively go soulwinning to get people saved.

Read what Evangelist Billy Sunday said in his classic sermon, *“The Second Coming Of Christ”*...

The Lord does not come to the world at the time of the Rapture, but only reveals himself to the members of His Body. At the time of his resurrection He was only seen by those who believed on Him. Pilate and

the High Priest, and those who crucified Him, did not know that He was risen. So it will be at the time of the Rapture. The world will not know that He has been here, and will have no knowledge of Him until He comes with the members of His Body, at the close of the Tribulation.

SOURCE: [The Second Coming of Christ — by Evangelist Billy Sunday](#)

Clearly, Billy Sunday concluded and taught a Pretribulation Rapture.

Plain Evidence Of A Pre-Tribulation Rapture

The Rapture and Christ's Second Coming Cannot Happen Together

Pastor Steve Anderson in Arizona is by far the biggest critic of the Biblical pretribulation Rapture. Also, Dr. Kent Hovind has recently changed his beliefs, now denying the pretribulation Rapture which he previously believed for 38-years. Respectfully, Pastor Anderson denies the Rapture completely! Brother Anderson teaches that Jesus' Second Coming is The Rapture in his film, "[AFTER THE TRIBULATION](#)." In his sequel titled: "[THE BOOK OF REVELATION](#)," he teaches that the Lord will return 75-days after the Abomination Of Desolation (half way, or 3 1/2 years through the Tribulation). This is commonly called the "PRE-WRATH" Rapture. This is the same heresy that Dr. Roland Rasmussen believed and taught, the preacher who led Steven Anderson's parents to the Lord. I love Pastor Anderson and support his ministry, I simply disagree with his denial of the Rapture. I share and admire his [aggressive emphasis on soulwinning!](#)

I admire investigative author and Christian, [Mark Dice](#), and I [recommend his cool videos exposing the Illuminati](#); BUT, Mark foolishly denies the pretribulation Rapture and you need to be aware of this. It appears that Radio host Alex Jones, Pastor Steve Anderson and others are all hellbent on destroying the Biblical doctrine of the pretribulation Rapture. Jesus plainly said that His return would be a surprise and without warning. Only a pretribulation Rapture (i.e., the imminent return of Christ at any moment) supports the Biblical element of surprise.

May I say, there is NOTHING in the Bible which supports anything other than a Pretribulation Rapture! Only a Pretribulation Rapture permits the element of surprise, which the Lord plainly taught. I heard Alex Jones and Steve Anderson say today on the February 1, 2013 Alex Jones Show that they aren't denying the Rapture. They sincerely think that the Rapture will occur AFTER the Tribulation period. If Christ's Second Coming and the Rapture are the same event, then there is effectively no Rapture. I know this all gets really confusing very quickly. It is all really very simple folks—Jesus said that NO ONE, not even the angels in Heaven, KNOW WHEN He will return; the only timing of the Rapture that allows for this element of surprise is BEFORE the Tribulation period! Otherwise we would KNOW exactly WHEN Jesus is coming back, because once the Antichrist appears, the Bible says [it will be 3 1/2 years until the Second Coming](#).

Clearly, the Rapture cannot happen [at the same time](#) as the Second Coming, because it wouldn't make any sense. Why would the saints be taken up (Rapture) [at the same time](#) that the saints are coming down (Second Coming)?

The Pre-Wrath view presents a different set of theological contradictions, removing the element of surprise completely. So why would Jesus command us all to WATCH (Mark 13:39)? That makes good sense to me! If the Antichrist must appear first, then we should all be LOOKING FOR THE ANTICHRIST!!! The Bible tells us to LOOK FOR THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD AND OUR SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST...

Titus 2:13, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;"

Jesus told His disciples (all believers) to WATCH FOR HIS RETURN...

Mark 13:35-37, "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

The Separating of the Tares from the Wheat

Please note that the following passage of Scripture is often misinterpreted. The Bible in this passage is NOT talking about the Rapture; but rather, the separation of the tares (unsaved) from the wheat (saved) at Christ's Second Coming...

Matthew 24:38-42, "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. **Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.** Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

Again, the preceding Bible passage is NOT speaking about the Rapture of the saints; but rather, the separating of the tares from the wheat at the Second Coming of Christ. This truth is evidenced by verses 38-39, likening these unsaved people (tares) with the unsaved who perished in Noah's time. Verse 42 does not refer to Christians by use of the words "your Lord." Jesus is the Lord of all humanity. Philippians 2:9-11 teaches that every human being will ultimately bow their knee and confess with their tongue that Jesus is Lord, then God will cast the unbelieving into the Lake of Fire forever.

Note that in my early years as a believer that I used to believe that the "two men in the field" and the "two women grinding at the mill" referred to the Rapture. I believed this simply because that is what I had always been taught in Sunday School and church. However, it is now clear to me that the tares (unsaved) are removed and not the wheat (saved). Matthew 13:40 confirms that the tares are the unsaved being removed from the earth, and not the righteous (wheat). **Matthew 13:40, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."**

Clearly this is a completely different and separate event than the Rapture, when the saints are removed instead. It would be silly to conclude that BOTH events happen at the Second Coming of Christ (that is, at the same time). It makes much more sense that the Rapture will happen BEFORE the 7-year Tribulation, and then the separation of the tares from the wheat will happen AFTER the Tribulation.

Now here's my point and the PROOF of a Pre-Tribulation Rapture: If the Rapture happens AFTER the 7-year Tribulation period, then the tares will be taken at the same time as the Rapture of the saints, which makes absolutely no sense. If God Raptures the saints at the time of His Second Coming (i.e., a Post-Tribulation Rapture), then what would be the purpose of separating the tares from the wheat? The Bible plainly teaches that the separating of the tares from the wheat is NOT the Rapture. The Rapture is when the saints are "CAUGHT UP" (1st Thessalonians 4:17). In sharp contrast, at the onset of Christ's Millennial reign, God is going to separate the wicked (tares) from the wheat (righteous)...

Matthew 13:36-42, "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. **The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity**; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

God is going to remove the wicked! Clearly this passage of Scripture does NOT refer to the Rapture. So why would God Rapture the righteous and then separate the wicked tares from the righteous wheat all at the same time as the Second Coming of Christ? How could this even be possible? So if the Rapture follows the Tribulation, then God would have to remove the righteous and the wicked, so there'd be NO ONE LEFT! Remember the film series called, "LEFT BEHIND?" Well what would be the purpose of Rapturing the saints and leaving the wicked behind if Christ is simultaneously returning to set up His Kingdom? If you think this through, it is so obvious that a Post-Tribulation Rapture is impossible, ridiculous and totally unbiblical. Honestly, the Post-Tribulation crowd are comical and woefully ignorant of the Bible.

Now a Pre-Tribulation Rapture makes perfect sense, because the unsaved wicked are left behind at the Rapture to suffer through the 7-year Tribulation which follows. That makes sense! That's what the Bible teaches! Alex Jones said on his February 1, 2013 show that "I know deception from the truth... anybody who has discernment would be freaking out over this" (i.e., a Pre-Tribulation Rapture). If you logic through the facts that I just gave you from the Bible, you can only conclude a Pre-Tribulation Rapture. The tares will be separated from the wheat at the END of the 7-year Tribulation when the Lord returns at the Second Coming. After the Battle Of Armageddon the tares will be separated from the wheat. The wheat (righteous) left behind are those people who will be saved during the Tribulation period. They will enter into the millennial Kingdom when Christ shall reign from Jerusalem over the entire earth.

The Early New Testament Church Elders Understood the Rapture

We've heard a bunch of lying propaganda on the internet from PreTrib Rapture bashers, alleging that John Darby invented the doctrine of the Rapture, which is not true. Although the *word* itself may or may not have been invented in 1834, popularized by Mr. Darby, the *doctrine* of the saints being "CAUGHT UP" is plainly taught in 1st Thessalonians 4:17 and was clearly understood by the early Church elders...

What Did Ancient Church Fathers Believe About The Rapture?

August 2, 2013 | [By Beginning and End](#)

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." –1 Thessalonians 4:17

What did the first century church fathers believe about the Rapture? Were they pre-tribulation or post-tribulation? What did the disciples of the Apostles of Jesus Christ teach about the Rapture?

This article will present the writings of the early church fathers – from those who learned under the disciples of Jesus Christ, to the church leaders of the second and third centuries, on the Rapture – the supernatural removal of all Bible-believing Christians from Earth to enter Heaven. While the writings of the first, second and third century Christian church fathers are not Scripture and not on par with the Bible in any way, it is informative to see how the early church leaders interpreted Scripture in addition to what they learned directly from those closest to The Lord Jesus Christ. And definitively, the few writings still in existence on the end times, put the timing of the Rapture before the Great Tribulation.

This article will also serve to dispel some of the common misconceptions about Rapture theology as being something invented in the 19th century by a man named John Darby...

"John Darby Invented The Pre-Tribulation Rapture"

John Darby has been incorrectly credited with "inventing" the Rapture. All over the internet there are many articles and videos that claim that the Rapture doctrine was "invented" in 1830 by a man named John Darby. The following is an excerpt that summarizes this theory:

"The Rapture doctrine, which was the invention of the Plymouth Brethren led by John Nelson Darby (1800-1882), has today been adopted by most Baptist, Pentecostals, Assemblies of God, and a variety of other fundamentalist sects. The idea that Jesus Christ will return for His true

Church just before the beginning of the Great Tribulation in a secret gathering or "catching away" was an important part of Darby's teaching. The movement in which this teaching began originated in small groups in England and Ireland about 1828 and by 1831 was part of the official teaching of the Plymouth Brethren. By 1860 the "rapture" had made its way to the United States.

Today, prophecy pundits and "end-time" revivalists preach the Rapture as if it were established dogma from the time of Christ until the present. The truth is that the first historical reference to the Rapture doctrine comes from the Plymouth Brethren. Not only is the Rapture not found in the teachings of the Church, but even "end-time" heretics throughout the centuries never dreamed of proposing such a novel idea. For example, the 4th century Montanists, who preached both pre-millennialism and that they knew when Christ would return, never ventured so far as to create another 2nd coming of the Lord in a secret rapture.

In all the writings of the Scriptures, the Early Fathers, and the Ecumenical Councils, there is no mention of two 2nd comings of Christ." ([source](#)) [Emphasis added].

In short, the objection is that rather than being a real part of the Bible, the entire idea of a pre-Great Tribulational Rapture was just an invention by Darby and "not even heretics" ever used it. This is very strong language, but is it true? Were there no ancient Christian writings about the church being Raptured before Great Tribulation? An examination of early church writings shows that this charge is false and there were some church fathers who indeed wrote about the Rapture.

Irenaeus

[Irenaeus](#) (130 A.D. – 202 AD) was a bishop of the church in Lyons, France. He was an eyewitness to the Apostle John (who wrote the Book of Revelation) and a disciple of Polycarp, the first of the Apostle John's disciples. Irenaeus is most-known for his five-volume treatise, [Against Heresies](#) in which he exposed the false religions and cults of his day along with advice for how to share the Gospel with those were a part of them.

In his writings on Bible prophecy, he acknowledged the phrase "a time, times and dividing of times" in Daniel 7 to signify the 3 ½ year reign of the Antichrist as ruler of the world before the Second Coming of Christ. He also believed in a literal Millennial reign of Christ on earth following the Second Coming and the resurrection of the just.

On the subject of the Rapture, in [Against Heresies 5.29](#), he wrote:

"Those nations however, who did not of themselves raise up their eyes unto heaven, nor returned thanks to their Maker, nor wished to behold the light of truth, but who were like blind mice concealed in the depths of ignorance, the word justly reckons "as waste water from a sink, and as the turning-weight of a balance — in fact, as nothing;"(1) so far useful and serviceable to the just, as stubble conduces towards the growth of the wheat, and its straw, by means of combustion, serves for working gold. **And therefore, when in the end the Church shall be suddenly caught up from this,** it is said, "There shall be tribulation such as has not been since the beginning, neither shall be."(2) For this is the last contest of the righteous, in which, when they overcome they are crowned with incorruption."

Irenaeus in this passage describes the church leaving the sinful world just before unprecedented disasters. Note his use of the term "caught up" which is Rapture terminology as that is the meaning of harpazo, the term for "**caught up**" in the King James Bible describing the Rapture in 1 Thessalonians 4. He then quotes Matthew 24:21 where The Lord Jesus Christ says: "**For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.**" And it is during this time that those who convert to Christianity during the final years will receive the incorruptible crown mentioned by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:25. In Irenaeus' belief, the Rapture took place prior to the end times Great Tribulation.

Cyprian

Cyprian (200 AD – 258 AD) – Cyprian was Bishop of the church in Carthage. During his short stint as leader of the church, he guided the flock through intense persecution at the hands of the Roman Empire. In 258 AD after spending seven months of confinement to his home by order of Roman authorities, he was beheaded for his faith. Several of his works still exist today.

In Treatises of Cyprian he wrote in describing the end times Great Tribulation:

"We who see that terrible things have begun, and know that still more terrible things are imminent, may regard it as the greatest advantage to depart from it as quickly as possible. Do you not give God thanks, do you not congratulate yourself, **that by an early departure you are taken away, and delivered from the shipwrecks and disasters that are imminent?** Let us greet the day which assigns each of us to his own home, **which snatches us hence,** and sets us free from the snares of the world and restores us to paradise and the kingdom."

Again we see use of language commonly found in reference to the Rapture as Cyprian describes the judgments of the end times as “imminent.” And he makes his belief on the timing of the Rapture when he wrote that Christians will have an “early departure” and be “delivered” from the devastating global judgments that come during the Day of The Lord.

In line with the Apostle Paul who wrote that **“God has not appointed us to wrath, but salvation...”** Cyprian expressed joy and encourages the believing reader to rejoice that the Church will be “taken away” before the disastrous Great Tribulation. Just as The Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 24 used the same language of one **“taken away”** and the other **“left.”** Additionally Cyprian references the mansions which The Lord Jesus Christ promises to come back and take His believers to in John 14.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” – John 14:1-3.

As Beginning and End detailed in our article **“The Red Moon Rapture – The Biblical Timing of The Rapture”**, in both the Matthew 24 passages (“one taken, the other left”) and in John 14 (“..receive you unto myself..”) the Greek work *paralambanō* is used for taken and receive. The meaning of that word is “join to one’s self” indicating that Jesus is coming to fully unify with His church – which takes place at the Rapture. Clearly Cyprian believed and taught that the Rapture takes place before the Great Tribulation.

Ephraim The Syrian

Ephraim (306 AD – 373 AD) was made a deacon in the church in Syria in 338 and later became the bishop of Nisibis. Although he was made a “saint” in the Roman Catholic Church, he was not involved in Catholicism and did not even live in the Roman Empire until the final years of his life. The book Pseudo Ephraim was one of his still existing works. It was called “Pseudo” because of later dispute over authorship. However the book’s one reference to the rapture is very compelling:

In his work, On The Last Times 2, he wrote:

“We ought to understand thoroughly therefore, my brothers, what is imminent or overhanging. Already there have been hunger and plagues, violent movements of

nations and signs, which have been predicted by the Lord, they have already been fulfilled (consummated), and there is not other which remains, except the advent of the wicked one in the completion of the Roman kingdom. Why therefore are we occupied with worldly business, and why is our mind held fixed on the lusts of the world or on the anxieties of the ages? Why therefore do we not reject every care of worldly business, and why is our mind held fixed on the lusts of the world or on the anxieties of the ages? Why therefore do we not reject every care of earthly actions and prepare ourselves for the meeting of the Lord Christ, so that he may draw us from the confusion, which overwhelms all the world? Believe you me, dearest brother, because the coming (advent) of the Lord is nigh, believe you me, because the end of the world is at hand, believe me, because it is the very last time.

Or do you not believe unless you see with your eyes? See to it that this sentence be not fulfilled among you of the prophet who declares: "Woe to those who desire to see the day of the Lord!" **For all the saints and elect of God are gathered, prior to the tribulation that is to come, and are taken to the Lord lest they see the confusion that is to overwhelm the world because of our sins.** And so, brothers most dear to me, it is the eleventh hour, and the end of the world comes to the harvest, and angels, armed and prepared, hold sickles in their hands, awaiting the empire of the Lord. And we think that the earth exists with blind infidelity, arriving at its downfall early. Commotions are brought forth, wars of diverse peoples and battles and incursions of the barbarians threaten, and our regions shall be desolated, and we neither become very much afraid of the report nor of the appearance, in order that we may at least do penance; because they hurl fear at us, and we do not wish to be changed, although we at least stand in need of penance for our actions!"

With a sense of urgency and strong warning, Ephraim writes that the end times are upon this world and could start at any moment. This text very clearly states the saints and elect of God, all born again believers in The Lord Jesus Christ, will be "taken to the Lord" before the Great Tribulation. Ephraim also identifies the Old Testament "Day of The Lord" and the end times Great tribulation **as the same event** (in line with the teachings of the Beginning and End Rapture Series). Ephraim quotes Amos 5:18 which says: "***Woe unto you that desire the day of the LORD! to what end is it for you? the day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.***"

The point he makes is that a Christian should know the Day of The Lord is coming. In the first part of the passage Ephraim notes that:

“We ought to understand thoroughly therefore, my brothers, what is imminent or overhanging. Already there have been hunger and plagues, violent movements of nations and signs, which have been predicted by the Lord, they have already been fulfilled (consummated)” And not only that but that true Christians will be taken away before it starts.

Here he is describing the first 3 of the first 4 seals of Revelation 6 – wars, famines and plagues. These are the same end times signs Jesus Christ describes in Matthew 24:

And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. – Matthew 24:3-8.

Jesus describes these events as “**the beginning of sorrows.**” He also says that when these things come to pass “**the end is not yet.**” Ephraim’s writing agrees with this interpretation as he says those same events have been “fulfilled (consummated)” in his day, but it was still not the actual Great Tribulation. This also falls in line with Beginning and End’s Rapture series as explained in our article [Who Are The Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse?](#) (The first four seals of Revelation 6 were opened at the time Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven. And the rapture itself does not occur until the opening of the 6th Seal.)

Ephraim in very strong language warns the reader not to be consumed with the cares of the world because the world in its current form, is coming to an end. As the Second Advent or Coming of The Lord Jesus Christ grows near, believers are to look to Heaven and set their hearts on pleasing God. It is clear that Ephraim distinguishes the Second Coming of Christ from the rapture, placing the Rapture before the Great Tribulation to come.

The Early Church Believed In The Rapture

The ancient writings are clear – the belief in the Rapture has existed since the days of the Apostles.

Although there are not a great number of writings on the end times from the early centuries of the church, there is no question that there was a belief in the Rapture among the church fathers and they taught it with strong language and scriptural support. In terms of the timing of the Rapture, the early church fathers placed it before the end times Day of The Lord/Great Tribulation. The writings of early saints in the church are not Scripture and should not be treated on the same level of the Bible. These writings also do not "prove" that the pre-Great Tribulation Rapture or the Beginning and End Rapture series are correct. Only rightly divided Scripture from the Bible can determine if a specific belief is accurate or in error. But the writings of church fathers can serve as useful commentaries (just as we use Bible commentaries today in our studies) and certainly prove that the Rapture doctrine existed well before John Darby and has been a part of Christian belief since the earliest days of the Apostles.

SOURCE: [What Did Ancient Church Fathers Believe About The Rapture? | Beginning And End](#)

Saints Receive A Body Fashioned Like Unto The Lord's

All Christians will be changed at the Rapture (1st Corinthians 15:52). Our sinful earthly bodies will be changed into incorruptible, eternal bodies. What a day that will be! No more neck pain from my herniated disks! We will be changed in less than a second...

*"Behold, I shew you a mystery [the Rapture doctrine]; **We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.**" —1st Corinthians 15:51-53*

The next great prophetic event on God's calendar is the blessed Rapture of the saints from the earth. *1st Corinthians 15:52, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. Philippians 3:20-21, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."*

The following Verse is one of my favorites in the whole Bible...

"And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." —

John 16:22

No one will ever ruin our day again. No more insults, no more gossip, no more bullies, no more mean people, no more rude remarks, no more jealous coworkers. Amen! Let's face it, many people are cold-hearted and insensitive, especially towards tender-hearted people. Tender-hearted people don't mix well with Cold-hearted people. Jesus foretold in Matthew 24:12 of the days when many people would become cold-hearted because of iniquity (Greek, "injustice"). We see this much today. With all the blatant crimes being committed by the U.S. government—the illegal war in Iraq, the theft of trillions-of-dollars of taxpayer money, our nations borders deliberately being unguarded, a Communist president, et cetera—many Americans have become angry, tired and thin-skinned. It's a rat-race in America.

Here is an easy way to remember the rapture as taught by the faithful man of God, Dr. Jack Hyles:

Jesus came to earth the first time **"TO"** His own approximately 2,000 years ago

Jesus is coming at the rapture **"FOR"** His own

Jesus is coming again at the second coming **"WITH"** His own

I've never heard it said any simpler than that. Jesus will come again at the Rapture FOR His own (i.e., for all the Saints throughout history). The dead in Christ shall be raised first and then Christians who are alive will be changed. Personally, I do not believe that the entire Rapture will occur in less than a second. I believe that the Bible is teaching that we as INDIVIDUALS will be *changed* in less than a second. The trumpet, voice of the archangel, raising of the dead first, and then the living, may be a significantly longer time. Howbeit, we know that we WILL BE CHANGED in the twinkling of an eye.

Jude 1:14 says, *"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints."* The Lord will return with tens-of-thousands of His saints at the Second Coming. This event occurs 7-years AFTER the Rapture of the Saints. In order for us to return WITH the Lord, we have to first be WITH the Lord. This is further evidence of a Pretribulation Rapture.

Again, an easy way to remember this is:

- Jesus came 2,000 years ago **TO** His own.
- He is coming at the Rapture **FOR** His own.
- Jesus will return at the Second Coming **WITH** His own.

Clearly, we will be with the Lord when he returns at the Second Coming.

It is clear from the following passage of Scripture that the Lord is returning FOR His saints at the Rapture...

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in

Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." —1st Thessalonians 4:13-18

In contrast, the Lord will be returning WITH His own at the end of the Tribulation period, to reign from Jerusalem as King over the earth (Isaiah 24:23; Micah 4:7). 2nd Thessalonians 2:3 clearly states that there must first come... "a falling away" before the Antichrist will be revealed. I believe these words, "a falling away," refer to the Rapture when the Saints are "caught away" from the earth. If we accept the Word of God at face value, I cannot see how anyone can conclude anything but a Pretribulation Rapture.

Imminent Return Of Christ Intended To Keep Believers On Their Toes

The whole purpose of the Bible not announcing WHEN the Lord will return is to maintain the element of surprise. *Luke 12:37 and 39-40* "*Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching ... And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.*" In total disregard for the imminent and sudden return of Jesus Christ, Pastor Steve Anderson foolishly states...

"The Rapture simply cannot happen at any moment."
—Pastor Steven L. Anderson, from his video titled, AFTER THE TRIBULATION (01:27:05 video)

To say that Jesus' return is not imminent is heresy. To say that Jesus cannot return immediately and suddenly without warning is to totally contradict the Bible. The whole idea behind "secrecy" is to keep believers on our toes. Anderson plainly rebukes the idea of a "secret Rapture," but this is the plain and bold teaching of the Word of God. *Mark 13:32*, "*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.*" Could the Bible be any plainer? After the *Abomination of Desolation* (Daniel 9:27 and 12:11 - the event when the Antichrist claims to be God from the temple in Jerusalem) it will be exact 3 1/2 years until Christ's Second Coming. Yet, Jesus said that NO MAN KNOWETH when He shall return, which plainly indicates the Rapture...

Mark 13:32-37, "*But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the*

cockcrowing, or in the morning: **Lest coming suddenly** he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, **Watch**."

This clearly CANNOT refer to Christ's Second Coming because the TIMING of these events can easily be known. If the Lord cannot return at any time at the Rapture as Brother Anderson teaches, then what would be the purpose to "WATCH?" Obviously, there would be no reason nor motivation to watch. If all the horrific events of the Tribulation must happen first, then it will be quite clear to Christians who are watching WHEN the Lord will return.

Here are some helpful words from the great man of God, author of over 200 books and mighty evangelist, Dr. John R. Rice (1895-1980) concerning the PRETRIBULATION Rapture...

II. No One Knows Even Approximately When Jesus Will Come

In the Olivet discourse the Saviour discusses the second coming. The clearest point in all His teaching on the second coming is that no one knows when it will be. Consider Mark 13:32-37:

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

Now observe the clear teaching of the Saviour that no man can know the time:

1. The angels do not know when Jesus will come.
2. The Lord Jesus Himself while on earth did not know when He would return.
3. Jesus said His second coming was so wholly unpredictable that it was illustrated by the servants waiting for their master's return. The master might come in the evening, midnight, cock-crowing or in the morning. In this world no one can foretell even approximately when Jesus will return and when this age will end. If the more than nineteen hundred years which have already elapsed since Christ promised to return be divided up into four watches or periods to represent evening, midnight, cock-crowing and morning, we find that Jesus is saying that no one can know even within centuries of the time of His return.

4. The all-important teaching of Jesus about His return is that He may come at any moment. His coming is imminent.

SOURCE: [Evangelist John R. Rice \(1895-1980\)](#), chapter 3 from the excellent book, [We Can Have Revival Now](#).

THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Read the Book of Revelation and all the horrible things which are going to happen during the 7-Year Tribulation (Revelation Chapters 6-13). One can only come to the logical conclusion that such events WOULD be a definite giveaway concerning the time when the Lord is going to return. Daniel prophesied concerned an event known as **THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION**... *"And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days"* (Daniel 9:27 and 12:11; see also Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14).

The Bible teaches that 3 1/2 years of time will follow this blasphemous act by the Antichrist, which means that everyone who understood the Bible would know EXACTLY when Jesus Christ would return. This goes 100% contrary to the plain statement of Jesus in Mark 13:33, *"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."* This is strong evidence in support of a Pretribulation Rapture.

The events prophesied to occur in the 7-year Tribulation period are extremely SPECIFIC. Yet, the Bible plainly states repeatedly that the Lord will return as a "thief in the night" (1st Thessalonians 5:2).

A Post-Tribulation Or Mid-Tribulation Rapture is Illogical

The Bible clearly teaches that there will be a judgment for all believers at the **Judgment Seat of Christ** (2nd Corinthians 5:10). The Bible also teaches that there will be the **Marriage Supper of the Lamb** for all believers (Revelation 19:9). If the Rapture isn't going to happen until DURING or AFTER the Tribulation, then when do these events occur?

A Post-Tribulation Rapture theory creates a serious dilemma in that there will be no time for the *Judgment Seat of Christ* nor the *Marriage Supper of the Lamb*. It is logical that the Rapture must occur BEFORE the Tribulation; and the Tribulation must occur BEFORE the Millennial reign of Christ from Jerusalem.

Here are 28 differences between the Rapture and Christ's Second Coming

What about a "Split Rapture"?

Though I greatly admire him, Pastor J. Vernon McGee believed in a "split rapture." Pastor McGee was a Presbyterian minister for many decades, faithfully serving the Lord. Nevertheless, there is no such teaching of a "split rapture" found in the Bible. Pastor McGee taught that ONLY the New Testament saints would be raptured at the beginning of the Tribulation, and then the Old Testament saints would be raptured after the Tribulation.

Again, I find no such teaching in the Bible. We are taught in 1st Thessalonians 4:13-18 that the “dead in Christ” would be raised first. Well, the Old Testament saints are all dead (except Enoch and Elijah who apparently never died a physical death). They will more than likely be the two prophets slain in Revelation. Hebrews 9:27 declares that all men must die... *"It is appointed unto men once to die."*

Thus, Old Testament saints will be raised up at the Rapture when Jesus returns FOR His own before the Tribulation. There is no reason to believe that Old Testament saints will be raised up at a different resurrection than New Testament saints. Revelation 20:6 plainly states... *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power..."* The FIRST resurrection is for all believers. The SECOND resurrection is only for the unsaved, the wicked (Revelation 20:11-15).

There is nothing Biblical about a split-rapture theory.

Rapture Versus Second Coming

The following Scripture speaks of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ...

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." —2nd Thessalonians 1:7,8

This will be at the Second Coming when Jesus returns WITH His saints and angels to fight the *Battle of Armageddon* in the valley of Megiddo (in Palestine). This is in sharp contrast to all the other Scriptures about the trumpet, the voice of the archangel, being changed in the twinkling of an eye and meeting in the clouds. Clearly we are looking at **two separate events** here; namely, the Rapture versus the Second Coming. A Posttribulation position places BOTH events as happening simultaneously. This is illogical.

- When Jesus comes FOR us at the Rapture, we will be caught up into the clouds.
- When Jesus returns WITH us at the Second Coming, we will return to the earth.

If the Posttribulation theory holds true, then the *Judgment Seat of Christ*, *Marriage Supper of the Lamb*, *Battle of Armageddon*, *Judgment of the Nations*, and other prophecies would all have to occur simultaneously, which makes no sense at all. Why would believers be Raptured into the clouds to meet with the Lord just to turn around and come right back to the earth? It makes much more sense to accept the Bible as literal, and conclude that the Rapture of the Church will occur 7-years prior to the *Second Coming* of Jesus Christ to the earth.

At the Second Coming Jesus will return to put down the Antichrist, judge the nations, and then establish His Millennial Kingdom to reign upon the earth for 1,000 years. What a time that will be!!! It is clear to me, and I think to any honest Bible student, that the events surrounding the Rapture versus the Second Coming are so distinct and varied that it would be impossible to conclude anything other than a Pretribulation Rapture.

THE CHURCH MUST BE REMOVED FROM THE WORLD

According to 2nd Thessalonians 2:6-9, the Antichrist will not be revealed until the Church (i.e., the light of this world; Matthew 5:14, "*Ye are the light of the world...*") is removed...

"And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."

Although there is controversy as to what the words "he who now letteth will let" means, I think the obvious interpretation is clear. In Matthew 5:14 Jesus plainly taught that believers are "the light of the world." Jesus is the Light (John 8:12) and it is Christ in our heart that shines in this dark and dreary world of sin and hate. Without Christians preaching the Word and fighting against sin, this world would quickly plunder into unimaginable wickedness. In order for the Antichrist to complete his *New World Order*, i.e., a Global Godless Totalitarian Communist Police State, led by Satan himself, the Church must be removed from the world.

At the Rapture, the *Body of Christ* (i.e., the Church) will be "caught away" from this world. At that time, the Antichrist will have NO OPPOSITION from people like me with websites exposing Satanism and every other form of debauchery. When the Church is gone, the Devil is going to have a heyday. Christians are a monkey-wrench for the *New World Order*. We really mess things up for them. We will never accept homosexuality, same-sex marriage, abortion, microchip implants, Communism, witchcraft, et cetera. We will not accept the Devil.

The world follows Satan because they are his children. But we as Christians are a peculiar bunch, zealous about good works, and follow only the LORD JESUS CHRIST. We are a big obstacle for the *New World Order*. The true Church is like a fierce pitbull guarding watch against lies, evil and the Devil. God is going to remove us from the world as part of His divine sovereign plan, so the Tribulation can happen, when Israel will be purged in preparation to receive her King and the inhabitants of the earth will be judged for their wickedness.

Further Evidence of a Pretribulation Rapture

God will NOT allow the Church to go through the *Tribulation Period*. It will be a time of atrocities as the world has never known! God wouldn't destroy the wicked in Noah's day until Noah and his family were all safely aboard the ark. Not one drop of rain fell until Noah and his family were on the ark, and God had shut the door. Afterwards, the rains fell and the wicked were utterly destroyed. The same is true of Lot and his family. Although Lot was a backslidden believer, he was nevertheless a "just" man, that is, a righteous man (2nd Peter 2:7,8).

We read in Genesis 19:22, "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither." These words were spoken by the angel whom God had sent to reign down fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah. No judgment could fall upon Sodom, until Lot and his family were removed. Likewise, the Church will be Translated (Raptured) away from this sin-cursed world before the Tribulation.

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." Revelation 3:10

The "word of my patience" in Revelation 3:10 is the Word of God. Here we have God's promise that because we have kept HIS WORD concerning salvation, i.e., because we have OBEYED the Gospel, He will keep us "from the hour of temptation" (i.e., the Tribulation Period). This seven-year period of tribulation is referred to in the Old Testament as *The Time of Jacob's Trouble* in Jeremiah 30:7-11...

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him ... Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."

It will be when the Church is removed from the earth (i.e., after the Rapture) that God will again recognize the nation Israel in a special covenant relationship with Himself. During the Great Tribulation, a remnant out of Israel will repent and turn to their Messiah. They will become His witnesses (Revelation 7:3-8). Thus, the time of Jacob's trouble will cause many Israelites to turn to the God of the Bible. We read in Matthew 24:14 concerning the Tribulation Period, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

We read in Revelation 7:4 who the 144,000 are going to be ... "And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." The 144,000 will be Jewish soulwinners! These are the preachers spoken of in Matthew 24:14. They will win multitudes of lost sinners to the Lord (Revelation 7:9). As a result, many of them will be martyred (Revelation 6:9).

THE END OF DAYS

The first 3 1/2 years of the tribulation are going to be a time of peace, when the False Prophet and the Antichrist will greatly influence the masses using signs and lying wonders (2nd Thessalonians 2:9). 2nd Thessalonians 2:10 tells us that the masses of the earth will eagerly follow the Antichrist because they loved not the truth that they might be saved... "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**" The world will worship the

Beast, the wicked Devil himself, just as they do innumerable Rock stars today. The Antichrist will very likely be a musical Rock star prior to his ascension to power.

As mentioned earlier, halfway through the Tribulation Period the Antichrist will commit what the Bible terms "The Abomination of Desolation" (Matthew 24:15). The Antichrist will claim to be god and require worship from his followers. At this point will begin what the Bible terms, GREAT TRIBULATION... *"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be"* (Matthew 24:21).

The last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation will be a time of woe that this world has never known... *"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it"* (Jeremiah 30:7). A meteorite will strike the earth... *"And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter [poison]"* (Revelation 8:11). One-third of all forests and crops will burn (Revelation 8:7). The oceans and rivers will be turned to blood (Revelation 8:8; 16:4).

The waters will be poisoned, the forests will be burned, bloodthirsty creatures from Hell (perhaps genetic mutants; Revelation 9:1-11) will torment mankind... *"And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months"* (Revelation 9:10). The blood from war will flow up to the horse's bridles (Revelation 14:20). Billions of people will be killed. This is what will happen in the *Great Tribulation*. Woe unto them!

I've shared a little prophecy with you here. If you really want to learn more about this subject, go online and buy the book ["Bible Prophecy" by Oliver B. Greene](#). It is a masterpiece.

Don't ever let anyone shake your faith in the simple and plain teachings of the Bible. God said what He meant and meant what He said. The Bible teaches a Pretribulation Rapture.

"If you take the Bible at face value, you can only come to the conclusion of a Pretribulation Rapture." —[Dr. Lee Roberson](#)

[The Holy Spirit and the End Time](#) (by Pastor Jack Hyles)

[Sir, The Rapture Comes Before Armageddon](#) (Real Audio sermon by Pastor Jack Hyles)

BEWARE ["After The Tribulation"](#) Film
HERESY!

[The Pretribulation Rapture Has Been Taught Throughout Christian History](#)

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